

Updated: 2/11/99

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR VEHICLE WASHING FACILITIES

Best management practices can be thought of as using “good housekeeping” practices. Listed below are several procedures to operate your facility and minimize the risk of contamination to the environment.

1. Pressure cleaning, steam cleaning and/or washing of vehicles may not be done over open ground.
 - a. Pressure cleaning, steam cleaning and/or washing must be done in an area designed to collect and contain the washing and rinse water or effluent. A system may recycle, collect or treat the effluent prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer system.
 - (i) If detergents or surfactants are not used, an oil and water separator connected to sanitary sewers or a holding tank will usually allow effluent to meet sanitary sewer standards.
 - (ii) If detergents, surfactants, solvents or hot water are used, the oils, waxes and grease are emulsified and an oil and water separator would no longer function properly. In these cases, further treatment or recycling systems must be used. If the treated water meets sanitary sewer standards, it can be discharged to the sanitary sewer. For existing facilities approved on septic tank (grandfathered), it can be stored in a holding tank, where it can be collected and hauled to a sewage treatment plant by a permitted septic tank hauler (if the wastewater meets the sanitary sewer discharge standards of 24-11(a), after prior written approval for DERM. **NO WASTE, OTHER THAN DOMESTIC SEWAGE MAY BE DISCHARGED INTO SEPTIC TANKS.**
 - (iii) No steam cleaning, pressure cleaning, nor degreasing of engines or undercarriages is allowed inside the average pumpage wellfield protection area of any public water supply wellfield.
- *** PLANS FOR VEHICLE WASHING FACILITIES, PRESSURE CLEANING, STEAMCLEANING AND/OR RECYCLING SYSTEMS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO DERM FOR APPROVAL BEFORE CONSTRUCTION.
2. Special attention should be paid to storm drain locations (also known as storm sewers). Storm drains are designed to help alleviate rainwater build up. These drains are not connected to the sanitary sewer system, but rather assist in allowing rainwater to drain directly into the ground, groundwater or to surface bodies of water. Therefore, only stormwater discharges are to go to these storm

drains. Areas near storm drains must be kept free of contaminants such as oil, grease, antifreeze and detergents so that rainwater does not wash these materials into the storm drains.

3. On properties served by any source of potable water supply and septic tank, the only car wash facilities that may be approved are those equipped with a self-contained water recycling system, provided the facility does not back wash the filters.
4. Spills of contaminants must be immediately picked up, liquids may be absorbed with "spill dry" or other absorbent materials, residues from solid spills may be vacuumed.
5. No discharges to surface waters are allowed.
6. All facilities must abide by all water use restrictions as may be imposed by the Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM) or the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Water recycling and reuse systems are strongly encouraged.

*****In all aforementioned situations where the waste is deemed to be hazardous, a permitted hazardous waste transporter must be used to transport the waste to federally approved hazardous waste treatment or disposal facility. Hazardous waste manifests, receipts and exception reports must be maintained at your required to obtain an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identification number, by contacting:

Notification Coordinator
Bureau of Waste Planning and Regulation
Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection
Two Towers Office Building Room 471
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400
(904) 488-4805

For facilities storing chemicals and/or fuels:

- a. All liquids (drums, aboveground tanks, etc.) stored indoors must be away from all floor drains and doorways must have secondary containment capable of holding 110% of the largest container stored in the area.
- b. All chemicals and/or fuels stored outdoors must have secondary containment. This containment area should be able to hold 100% of the largest single tank to be stored in this area and have an approved method to properly dispose of the accumulated stormwater.
- c. Chemical storage areas must be on an impervious surface with secondary containment or a bermed and covered area from drainage structures (e.g. floor drains or storm drains).

If you have any questions on these matters, please contact the Industrial Facilities Section of DERM at (305)372-6600.